DEWAN : പൊതുജനങ്ങളേയും വരുത്തി തെളിവെടുക്കുന്നതിൻ ലാസ്സ്ഡിലേസ് കമ്മീഷണരെ അധികാരപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്.

അടുത്തതായി പഞ്ചായത്തു കോടതിയെപ്പറ്റി നിങ്ങൾ പറഞ്ഞു. ഓരോ സ്ഥലങ്ങളിലുമുള്ള ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരുടേയും ആ സ്ഥലത്തെ പേഷ്കാരുടേയും പരിചയത്തിൽ യോഗ്യന്മാരാണെന്നു തോന്നുന്നവരെയാണ് പഞ്ചായത്തു കോടതി ജഡ്ജിമാരായി നിയമിച്ചുവരുന്നതു്. ചില സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ വക്കീലന്മാരേയും നിയമിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. കഴിയുന്നതും ന്യായം നടത്തുമെന്നു വിശ്വാസം തോന്നുന്ന ആളുകളെയാണ് ഇപ്പോൾ നിയമിച്ചുവരുന്നതു്. എങ്കിലും അതിനെപ്പറ്റി കുറെക്കൂടി ശ്രദ്ധിക്കാം.

പിന്നീട് പോലീസ് കാൺസ്റ്റബിൾമാക്കു ശമ്പളം കൂട്ടികൊടുക്കണമെന്നു നിങ്ങൾ പറയുകയുണ്ടായി. ഇപ്പോൾ തന്നെ കൺസ്റ്റബിൾമാക്കു ശമ്പളക്കൂടുതൽ കൊടുത്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. ആദ്യമായതു് ൻ-രൂപാകിട്ടിവന്നിരുന്നവക്കു ഫ ഫ-രൂപായാക്കുകയും, അതിനുമുകളിൽ ശമ്പളം ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നവക്കു ഓരോരൂപാവീതം കൂട്ടുകയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇതൊരുവലിയ ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറായതുകൊണ്ടു കുറേശെകുറേശേ മാത്രമെ ശമ്പള കൂട്ടുതൽ കൊടുക്കാൻ സാധിക്കുകയുള്ളൂ. അതു ഇപ്പോൾതന്നെ ചെയ്തിട്ടുമുണ്ട്.

MEMBER : പോലീസ് ഇൻസ്പെക്ടർമാരിൽ സത്യസന്ധന്മാരും യോഗ്യന്മാരുമായിട്ടുള്ളവരെ മജിസ്ട്രേട്ടന്മാരായി കയറ്റംചെയ്താൽ അതു് അവക്കൊരുപകാരമായിരിക്കും.

DEWAN : ആലോചിക്കാം.

[The Law's Delays Commissioner has been authorised to examine not only the presiding officers of courts, and practising vakils but also members of the public. Appointments to the Village Panchayat Courts made in consultation with the local officers and the Dewan Peishkar concerned. The most suitable men are appointed and those who, the Government think, will dispense justice, are alone selected. Vakils are appointed in some places. More attention will be bestowed in the matter of the selection of judges. In the case of Police constables, an enhancement of pay has just been granted. The lowest pay has been raised from Rs. 9 to Rs. 11 per mensem and the pay of all grades raised by one rupee. As it is a big department, increase of pay can be granted only gradually. The suggestion to promote efficient and honest Inspectors as Magistrates will be considered.]

21. Disabilities of women in courts, lock-ups, etc.

MRS. ANNA CHANDY (*Nominated*) thanked Government, at the outset of her representation, for having nominated women representatives to the Assembly. She said that it was a matter for gratification that the sex-disabling clause in the Rules of the Assembly was abrogated during

the regime of Her Highness the Maha Rani Regent. In like manner, Section 11 of the Municipal Regulation which disqualified women from becoming members of Municipal Councils and the rule which debarred them from being appointed as Bench Magistrates and Panchayat Court Judges should be done away with.

Speaking about the disabilities of women in courts and lock-ups, the member said that women who had to appear either as witnesses or as parties in law courts underwent great hardship by having to wait in the hot sun or in the verandahs of the courts in the company of the most undesirable members of the other sex. In some courts, however, there were waiting sheds, but they were not fit places for respectable women to wait. The agony of women waiting in court verandahs in the midst of crowds of men was often aggravated by the fact that there were no convenient places for answering calls of nature. Separate waiting sheds and urinals should be provided for women in the premises of law courts. Considerations of cost should not deter Government from providing reasonable amenities for women who would be obliged to attend law courts.

The necessity of constructing waiting sheds and urinals might not arise if some arrangement could be made by which cases in which women figured as witnesses or as parties were taken up first and disposed of early in the day. If all such cases could not be dealt with in that manner, maintenance cases under Section 366 of the Criminal Procedure Code should be arranged to be taken up first, by a circular order of the High Court. Very often, women who came from distant places with their infant children had to wait till five or six o'clock in the evening as maintenance cases were usually taken up last. Consequently, the poor women were exposed, on their way home, to the risk of being molested by the persons from whom they claimed maintenance.

The sufferings endured by women in police lock-ups were still more serious. Though the evil was once sought to be remedied by an interpellation in the Legislative Council, nothing had been done by the Government. Female warders attended on women convicts in the Central Prison, but in Police lock-ups women accuseds were in the custody of constables. The appointment of female warders for Police lock-ups entailed additional expense and incidental troubles. But if women could not be kept in custody without doing violence to their sex, it would be better if all women offenders were let on bail immediately. That would not be too ambitious a demand in a country where women were allowed concessions even in the matter of punishments.

The legal provision that searches on women should be conducted by women was more honoured in the breach than in the observance. It was all the more necessary therefore that women warders should be appointed in Police Stations. If the women employed as sweepers in the Police Stations were given slightly higher pay, they might be entertained as warders. The reform should be introduced in at least the more important Police Stations in the State.

The member concluded by suggesting that, until women attained a position of equality with men, special privileges should, of necessity, be accorded to them. Qualified women should not be kept out of the public life of the country by reason of their sex.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mrs. Anna Chandy. I shall convey to Her Highness the Maha Rani Regent with the greatest pleasure the sentiments of loyalty and gratitude which you, on behalf of yourself and the other lady members of this Assembly, gave expression to. I may also say how glad I am to be able to say that the fear that you expressed at the beginning of your speech that perhaps the representations made by women members of this House may be wanting in form and the request that I should look upon your performance with a lenient eye were both unnecessary. As a matter of fact, I should like to express my sincere opinion that your representation has been one of the best and most useful representation and one of the most moderate in the sense that it does not refuse to look at the other side of things but impartially considers both sides.

With regard to the actual representation that you have made, you know that the question of women accused taken to Police Stations and of proper accommodation being made for them in Police lock-ups, has been under the consideration of Government for some time. But as you yourself concede, it is not possible for the Government to do all that is necessary all at once. Government can only proceed step by step in that direction. But you have been fair enough not to stand upon the extreme step at each of your prayers, but you have asked only for the minimum which it is possible for the Government to do.

In regard to these representations of yours, I shall refer them to the High Court, the District Magistrates and the other authorities concerned. Government will be prepared to do all that they can in furtherance of your representation.

I congratulate you again on the way in which you have discharged your duty as the first woman member to make a representation before the Assembly.

22. Hardships of litigants.

MR. NAGENDRA NAIKAN RAMANATHA NAIKAN (*Trading classes, Kayankulam*) who made his representation in Malayalam, said that the Munsiffs and Judges were devoting a great deal of their time to matters relating to execution of decrees and office work and that they were giving little time to the actual disposal of cases. It caused delay in the disposal of cases and consequent hardships to the public. The presiding officers of courts should be freed from work of that kind by the appointment, in each court, of a separate officer with duties and powers similar to those of the Registrar of the High Court.

It was very necessary to revive the old practice of returning the account books produced in courts by merchants immediately when